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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000958

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR BRIAN WALCH
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR MICHELLE GAVIN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: FORMER GUERRILLA FIGHTERS DISCUSS SECURITY REFORM
IN ZIMBABWE

Classified By: AMBASSADOR CHARLES A. RAY FOR REASONS 1.4 B,D

11. (C) SUMMARY: Reform of the security sector is an absolute prerequisite to solid political reform in Zimbabwe. Former ZAPU and ZANU fighters who are not part of the current government have formed an organization to highlight this need. The reform process must have broad-based Zimbabwean consensus and ownership, be inclusive of all stakeholders, and be credible. It has to be actively pushed by South Africa and other SADC members, and must have the support of the international community. The U.S. role, as part of the international community, must be carefully and discretely managed. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) EU Delegation Head of Mission to Zimbabwe Xavier Marchal, hosted a luncheon for EU, U.S., and Canadian COMs on December 8, 2009, to discuss security sector reform. A briefing was provided by members of the board of Zimbabwe Peace and Security Program (ZPSP), who are former guerrilla fighters in the war against the Ian Smith regime; Jeremy Brickhill, a white Zimbabwean who fought with Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU; along with Wilfred Mhanda and Nyasha Masiwa, former ZANU fighters, and Bjorn Holmberg, a senior consultant with SwedePeace, a Swedish NGO that supports ZPSP.

13. (C) The ZPSP members say they have spoken to representatives of all three parties in the coalition government, to include the ZANU Minister of State Security, as well as many senior military and police officials. They said that no one has expressed any disagreement with their view that there has been a betrayal of the principles they fought for as young men, and that their legacy is in danger. The two ZANU veterans pointed out that ZANU's history is suppression of debate and discussion, based probably on the teachings of its Communist mentors. Unfortunately, they said, no ZANU official is currently willing to agree with them publicly. It is wrong of the international community to think of all ZANU officials as corrupt or bad, they maintain, as only 6 - 12 people in the party are direct beneficiaries of the looting that has taken place in Zimbabwe. (COMMENT: While there are a small number of people around Mugabe who now control Zimbabwe, the number of ZANU-PF members who have benefited from the deliberate mismanagement of the country is much larger than 6-12. END COMMENT.) The problem, though, is how do you deal with even that small number of people when they occupy key leadership positions? The rank and file, and here they are referring to enlisted personnel as well as officers at brigadier and below, all recognize that we are dealing with systemic failure, that freedom and democracy have not yet been realized in Zimbabwe, and there is a need for overhaul of the political and governance framework to avoid Zimbabwe becoming a failed state. There needs to be a national body, which perforce would include members of ZANU-PF, as well as civil society, to work together to

resolve this issue. (COMMENT: That same thing could be said for most of the issues facing Zimbabwe. END COMMENT.) People need to focus not on who is at fault for the country's current malaise, but on how to get out of it.

¶4. (C) South Africa, and to a lesser extent the other members of SADC, have a critical role to play in helping achieve security sector reform, and with SA President Zuma replacing Thabo Mbeki as lead on the issue, there is a chance that something can finally be done. Mbeki, they said, was more interested in protecting commercial interests in Zimbabwe, and was more unhelpful than helpful. Regional partners have a stake in a stable Zimbabwe, and need to take a more active role in encouraging all parties in Harare to look for solutions to their problems. There is a role for the international community, because such a program is expensive and will require international funding.

¶5. (C) Regarding the Global Political Agreement (GPA), they said that it is important to look at it as a process that will take time, rather than trying to impose arbitrary deadlines. The common people of Zimbabwe appreciate the peace and stability the GPA has brought and don't want to see it fail. Politicians, on the other hand, of all parties, want it to collapse because they each - from their different perspectives - think they could use its failure to their advantage.

¶6. (SBU) Finally, they noted that it is extremely important that donor programs be coordinated and coherent. Different programs that might be working at cross purposes will surely fail and further impede Zimbabwe's progress toward political

HARARE 00000958 002 OF 002

reform.

¶7. (C) COMMENT: In a private conversation with the three former guerrillas after the other ambassadors had left lunch, ambassador discussed the U.S. role in security sector reform. They felt that as the world's superpower, our endorsement is critical, but recognized that too blatant public involvement by the USG could cause ZANU-PF hardliners to be suspicious of the motives of the program, and reject it out of hand. We need also to consider the impact sanctions might have on our ability to support any program that has ZANU-PF participation. What might be required is a waiver of the limitations specifically to support such a program, provided we are assured that funds will be used as intended. Establishment of a trust fund might also be considered. That way, all international donors would put money into one place, and it could be disbursed by an office or activity that met with donor approval. We also need to keep in mind that while U.S. support is important, the program should not be seen as U.S. dominated or originated. On this ride, we need to steel ourselves to riding along in the back seat with map in hand when our assistance is needed.

¶8. (C) ZPSP is focused on the military, rather than other institutions such as the police or judiciary (although they do recognize that these, as well as the prisons, must be included in any program), and looks at security sector reform as a long term process. The strength of ZPSP is the access of Brickhill and others to high-level securocrats. But the securocrats have so far mostly rejected the GPA and the new government -- to the extent that they have refused to recognize Morgan Tsvangirai as Prime Minister and to participate in regular meetings of the National Security Council -- and it is far from clear that they would buy into a reform process that would likely undercut their positions and power. END COMMENT.

RAY